

07/26/2007

## **HOUSE APPROVES \$2.5 MILLION TO HELP UPGRADE RAIL LINES IN CHIPPEWA AND BARRON COUNTIES**

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Seventh District Congressman Dave Obey (D-WI) announced today that the U.S. House of Representatives has approved his request for \$2.5 million in next year's transportation appropriations bill to help the Wisconsin West Rail Transit Authority (WWRTA) upgrade rail lines in Chippewa and Barron Counties.

“Our transportation infrastructure, such as roads and rails, are an essential part of our economy and are necessary for the

creation of good-paying jobs for the region,” said Obey, the Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee. “So I’m glad the House approved my request for these funds to help improve the rail network in Chippewa and Barron Counties so we can maintain a strong, balanced transportation system for the region without putting too much of a strain on local taxpayers.”

State Senators Bob Jauch and Pat Kreitlow were also strong advocates for the project, Obey added.

WWRTA is a joint Authority of Chippewa and Barron Counties that was formed in 2001 to preserve and strengthen rail service in the counties. The federal funds are intended to help the Authority move forward with a multi-phase plan to upgrade to 25mph the roughly 50 miles of existing track in Chippewa and Barron County.

However, the bill must still be approved by the Senate and signed by the President before it becomes law  
, Obey warned. “But having these funds included in the House passed bill means that a major hurdle has been cleared,” he concluded.

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